

“Pathways to Healthier U” Health Fair

November 5, 2008

Earnest C. Brooks and West Shoreline Correctional Facilities

Submitted by: Warden Mary Berghuis

“When Rosanne Leland, the Departments’ Work/Life Services Coordinator, approached me about having a Health Fair at my facility, I was a little concerned about how we would do a good job with it given the current work load pressures, but decided we should try it anyway. It never occurred to me it would be the great experience that it was or that outside vendors would be as interested in participating as they were!

Deputy Warden Bobbi Smith of West Shoreline Correctional Facility was selected to manage the Health Fair and she had a group of the “can do” types assist her (staff with proven track records for success). We were able to host it at both Brooks and West Shoreline.

There was an air of excitement and excellence in the areas where it was being conducted. The vendors covered a wide range of good health information including: home heating, energy saving tips, motorcycle safety (the first time ever that a motorcycle was on display in the lobbies!) how to invest your money wisely, exercise programs, yoga, a martial arts “live” demonstration, physical health screenings (blood pressure, body fat analysis, and body mass index) some 25 vendors in all. Vendors and local businesses in Muskegon donated door prizes with more than 64 gifts being given out. A programmable thermostat, a CD and pedometer from a fitness program are just as a couple of examples of the gifts.

There was good participation at both facilities by a wide range of classifications employees. I participated too and noticed that staff were enjoying themselves very much and really getting worthwhile information! The booths were attractive and the vendors were interesting. The printed materials were very professional and “catchy”.

When the day was done, feedback received from both staff and vendors was very positive and everyone was interested in having another fair next year.

I want to acknowledge and indicate my appreciation to Rosanne Leland who participated in the Health Fair, Deputy Bobbi Smith, Sequita Jackson, Artis Shackelford, Robert Darnell, Marcus Wallace, Ronnie Johnson, Dawn Millstead, Lori Phipps and Bev Morse for doing such a perfect job and making it meaningful for all of us. Based on our experience, I support having another Health Fair next year, and I would recommend an event like this to others.

Rosanne reported on some of the feedback received to the question: *As a result of participating in the Health Fair are there changes you will be making in your health behavior?*

“Yes, I have learned stress management techniques which I will use”.

“Yes, I will exercise more”.

“Eating healthier, drinking more water and reducing stress”.

“I learned about financial planning, and I will manage my finances better!”

“I will consider joining the YMCA, so I can be more physically fit”.

“Keeping a closer watch on my blood pressure”.

The Employee Clubs from Brooks and West Shoreline purchased the food and beverages, which included a nutritious lunch. The sandwiches served were prepared (as a class project) by the Food Tech Instructor, Debra Ressler, and her students”.

A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!